Digital government toolkit

Digital Government Strategies: Good Practices

Canada: Enterprise IT Governance, Planning, Reporting and Oversight

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The OECD Council adopted on 15 July 2014 the Recommendation on Digital Government Strategies. The Recommendation provides a set of 12 principles structured around 3 pillars. The OECD Secretariat has developed a Digital Government Policy Toolkit to support OECD member countries and non-member adhering countries with the implementation of the Recommendation. This practice was submitted by the government of Canada to be considered as a good practice in the implementation of one or more of the principles contained in the Recommendation.

Description of the practice:

Organisation: Chief Technology Officer of the Government of Canada, Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat

Name of the practice: Enterprise IT Governance, Planning, Reporting and Oversight

Principles implemented: Principle 6 – Ensure coherent use of digital technologies across policy areas and levels of government

Description:

To ensure coherent use of digital technologies across Government of Canada (GC) departments and agencies (policy centres), Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat Office of the Chief Information Officer of Canada (TBS OCIO) has implemented an enterprise information technology (IT) management methodology, supported by tools that enable the aggregation of data on, and oversight of, departmental IT plans, expenditures and applications in support of alignment to GC IT modernization priorities including digital government.

The IT Plan reporting templates, guide and application provides a common and consistent method for departments to report on planned IT investments over three years. This allows for comparative analysis across and between departments; and informs the GC Committee on Enterprise Priorities and Planning as to the progress and alignment between departmental planned IT expenditures and digital transformation efforts.

The **IT Expenditure Reporting** templates and guide provide a consistent way for departments to report on previous year's expenditures. This allows for comparative analysis between similar departments as well as enterprise evaluation against the baseline.

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The **Application Portfolio Management (APM)** tools and guide provide standardized lifecycle management and aging IT assessment methodologies which departments use to analyze their business application inventory to help them improve their stewardship of applications, particularly those supporting critical departmental services.

The **IT Management Accountability Framework (MAF)** identifies the key elements needed for sound IT management in government and ensures that departments continue to focus on management excellence and the delivery of effective programs and services, while aligning to enterprise priorities.

A common repository and platform are used for government departments to report on their IT Plan and APM data. This is used for evidence-based reporting for IT MAF, and for driving business decisions by management.

The core elements of the GC IT Management Model are supported and influenced by The GC **Enterprise Architectural Review Board** (GC EARB), and Project Review and Oversight, as well as standardized departmental Investment Planning.

The **GC IT Modernization Priorities** is a list of priorities established by the GC that departments need to incorporate into their departmental IT Plans.

TBS OCIO has established **enterprise governance committees** to drive the alignment of IT and IT-enabled initiatives to enterprise-wide business priorities.

Results

In support of Government services and operations priority, the below practices establish new performance standards for government and measure and report on performance. Their results are also a fair and open government lens that makes government accounting and financial reporting more consistent, transparent and understandable to Canadians:

- More cohesive planning for GC IT activities at an enterprise level.
- Increased transparency for departmental expenditures, plans and assets.
- Identification and evaluation of business continuity plans for IT assets.

Development

Design:

TBS OCIO consulted broadly with departmental chief information officers (CIOs) via CIO Council, central service providers – Public Services and Procurement Canada and Shared Services Canada, Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat Office of the Comptroller General and Office of the Chief Human Resources Officer, Heads of IT, and senior officials through various committees and fora.

Additionally, IT service standards, and best practice consultant groups (ex. Gartner) were leveraged to ensure alignment between governmental and industry practices.

We have established a feedback loop through monthly information sessions with departments where we receive input and make continuous improvements.

Testing:

2012 – TBS CIOB collects departmental **IT plans**

2013 – **Repository** for IT Plan data is established

Working groups and pilots were used extensively to vet the tools and processes and repository interface.

Implementation:

2014 – Introduced the **Enterprise IT Plan** Process, structure and toolset including GC IT Modernization Priorities (GC-wide IT priorities which departments must address in their annual IT plans). These priorities are GC-wide initiatives/projects that are lead from the centre (i.e. TBS, SSC, and/or PWGSC) and that involve modernizing some aspect of IT across government. Typically, initiatives are multi-year and impact all/the majority of departments and agencies. Repository tool (CA-Clarity) implemented and data collected from around 40 departments.

2015 – Established the GC IT Modernization Priorities; introduced Project Categories which serve to describe primarily business-driven initiatives; Continued to leverage the standard toolset. Introduced GC-wide governance structure and process.

Tools: CA-Clarity – a project and portfolio management system, customized to support the collection, storage, management and disposition of departmental IT plan and applications data. Microsoft Excel and Word (templates). Online Portal

2017-18: Matured Enterprise Prioritization & Planning through the introduction of a priorization framework applied by all departments resulting in a GC prioritized project list visible across the GC.

Resources: Each subject area – IT plan, IT expenditures, APM, MAF – requires a dedicated senior analyst. Governance is supported by a lead analyst and Secretariat. COTS and in-house tool development as needed.

Diffusion and scaling:

TBS CIOB regularly shares information with provincial and territorial governments via committees such as the Public Service CIO Council (PSCIOC).

- GCConnex (the GC's professional social networking platform). The purpose of GCconnex is to enable public servants to connect and collaborate based on shared interests, knowledge, and experience.
- Information and training sessions – in person and via WebEx (online meetings over the Internet)
- Presentations at various internal fora including Chief Information Officer Council, the GC Enterprise Architecture Review Board, and externally, such as FWD 50.

Refer to latest version of the Government of Canada Strategic Plan for Information Management and Information Technology 2017 to 2021 on Canada.ca, clearly providing strategic direction the GC and identifies enterprise-wide priorities and key activities for departments.

The current practice includes 43 federal government departments and agencies. Other agencies and small departments are encouraged to participate.

Elements of the GC IT Management Model, including tools have been shared with Canadian provincial and territorial governments through regular information sharing fora.

Success factors include: standardized methodology, effective working groups, regular communications and use of common reporting tools.Success factors include: standardized methodology, good working groups, regular communications and use of common reporting tools.

Partnerships:

Yes, other public sector organisations

<u>**Lessons learned**</u>

- Establish a standardized methodology
- Use common methods and tools to increase consistency in data to support aggregate data analysis
- Make use of working groups
- Share information, consult widely and publish as much as possible to ensure broad understanding and engagement
- Recognize that there is are limits to absorbing change; look to stage or sequence change projects

<u>Conditions required:</u>

- Senior executive support and leadership
- Dedicated resources
- Broad consultation and frequent communication out to impacted communities
- Insights from information collected should be shared
- Feedback to promote future participation and engagement

Additional information:

The practice of using common tools and consistent methods to support IT management across multiple policy areas; plus the requirement to align plans to GC enterprise priorities, including Canada's Digital Government strategy, is highly **scalable** and **sustainable** and currently is embedded into the departmental investment planning processes across the GC.

The tools and methods are simple and could easily be **replicated** and implemented in other jurisdictions.

It's a journey (2008-2015) with early successes seen in departments which set the foundation for moving the discipline up to the enterprise level. As the practice continues to mature across the federal government, and as data quality improves, the positive **impact** of implementing this practice will increase. The GC will be able to make more informed decisions at the enterprise level as to where investments in ICT are needed in order to advance the Government's agenda regarding Digital Government.